(c) The Planning Commission had set up a Committee on Development of Bio-fuel which recommended the launching of a National Mission on Bio-diesel with special focus on the plantation of Jatropha Curcas. The Ministry of Rural Development is the nodal Ministry for the proposed National Mission on Bio-diesel. That Ministry has had a Detailed Project Report (DPR) prepared. The Planning Commission have recently received the DPR for 'in principle' approval. Independent R&D efforts undertaken by Oil Companies for promoting bio-diesel, both for production and for use of different blends of bio-diesel in petro-diesel in transportation sector have yielded satisfactory results. However, the possibility of future commercial use of bio-diesel as an auto-fuel is dependent on the overall economics of bio-diesel availability at reasonable prices.

Government is also implementing a 5% ethanol-blended petrol programme in notified sugar producing States and adjoining areas in terms of Gazette Notification No. GSR705(E) dated 27.10.2004 and the Memorandum of Understanding signed on 4.8.2005 with the Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA).

National Gas Grid

1683. SHRI THANGA TAMIL SELVAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any pipeline policy has been framed for setting up of National Gas Grid;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government will expedite setting up of National Gas Grid to take care of the gas scarcity region in the country?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) The Ministry have proposed a draft Gas Pipeline Policy which envisages the development of a nation-wide gas grid in a competitive environment, involving both the public sector and private sector, under the overview of a Regulator. The draft Pipeline Policy aims to encourage competition, efficiency and greater investment in this sector, all of which will ultimately benefit the consumer and the economy in general. The provisions of the Policy would be in line with the provisions of the proposed Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) Act, which is under the active consideration of Government.